

CONCERNING

THE

Sinfulness  
Danger  
Remedies } of Infidelity.

A

SERMON

Preached at *Whitehall*,

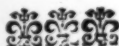
*Feb. 16. 1667.*

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BY

SETH Lord Bishop of Sarum.

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LONDON,

Printed for *James Collins*, at the Kings-  
head in *Westminster-hall*. 1670.

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(1)



THE  
SINFULNESS  
OF  
INFIDELITY:

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Heb. III. 12.

*Take heed brethrens, lest there be in any of you, an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.--Exhort one another daily. ---*



Shall not spend time in a disputation concerning the Author of this Epistle, viz. whether it were *Paul*, or *Barnabas*, or *Luke*, or *Clemens*, or *Apollos*, &c. but shall with the Church of England, suppose *S. Paul* to have been the Author of it.

A 2

If

If the Author of it be not infallibly known, this ought not to detract from its Authority.

Most of the other *Epistles* have been *acknowledg'd* to be of *divine* Authority, because they were *known* to have proceeded from *Apostolical* writers.

This (on the *contrary*) hath been concluded to be an *Apostolical* Epistle, *propter τὴν φειδωλὴν καὶ γνῶμιν Characterem*, by reason of that divine and Apostolical Spirit, which to those who have had their Senses exercised, hath manifestly appeared in it.

If it were lawful (in this sense) to compare *spiritual* things with *spiritual*; I should not fear to affirm, that this *Epistle* hath in it some *peculiar advantages*; Compared with some other of the *Epistles*. (*Advantages*, I mean, of usefulness, not of Authority, seeing all of them issued from the same Spirit.)

The *design* of it is *General, Fundamental, Comprehensive*, not *Private, Circumstantial, Occasional*; And it hath peculiarly conveyed to the Church two great treasures. **I. A Compleat Model,**

or



or System, of *Christian Divinity*. And  
 2. the *Way* of that *Analogy*, and manner  
 of ratiocination, whereby the *true Spi-*  
*rit*, and meaning of the *Types* and *Pro-*  
*phesies* of the *Old Testament* is to be  
 found out and applied.

It was directed to the *Hebrews*; That  
 is, to those of the *Jewish Nation*, who  
 had received the *Gospel*, and made a  
 Profession of Christianity. And the  
 main *Scope* and *design* of it, is to pre-  
 serve the Professors of Christianity  
 from *Apostacy* and *Infidelity*.

The *means* used to this purpose; are  
 partly *Didactical*, and partly *Protrepiti-*  
*cal*; *Demonstrating* the truths of the  
*Gospel*, and then *urging* the Professors  
 of those truths, to be *stedfast* in the  
*faith*, and to beware of *Infidelity*.

The *Method* here used is a *mixt me-*  
*thod* of *Doctrine* and *Application*; *Dog-*  
*matical*, truths and *pathetical Exhorta-*  
*tions* continually interwoven.

He begins with the *Great foundation* Chap. 1.  
 of our *faith*. *Christ* is the Son of God,  
 the *brightness* of his glory; better then  
 the *Angels*. Wherefore if the Word Chap. 1.  
 spoken by Angels was *stedfast*, how

#### 4. The Sinfulness

shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?

Chap. 3. From the *Comparison* of *Christ* with *Moses*, he concludes, against Hardness of Heart and Infidelity.

§. 6. 7. 8. He demonstrates the *Priesthood* of *Christ* to be more *Excellent* then that of *Aaron*; and in the *midst* of his argument, he falls into an *Application*, or *Corollary*, concerning the dreadful Condition of them that fall away.

6. This is his design, and method, thorowout the Epistle; *Whatever Doctrine* he is upon, this is still the *drift* and *aim* of all his *Applications*, namely to *preserve* the *Professors* of *Christianity*, from *Apostacy* and *Infidelity*.

3. 4. The words, which I have chosen, are a *Reiteration* or *Reinforcement* of an *Application*, or *Corollary*, arising from the Consideration of the *Excellency* of *Christ* above *Moses*. *Moses* was faithful in the house as a *Servant*; *Christ* as a *Son*, over his *own* house. This house are *we* if we hold fast *our faith*.

Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith,  
*Harden not your hearts—*

Take

*Take heed brethren, lest ———*

I say, the words are an *Use of Exhortation*, and in them are considerable,

1. The Persons to whom directed: Professors of Christianity, expressed in the Word *Brethren*.

2. Matter or Object about which it is conversant, *Unbelief*: heart *unbelief*.

3. Form of Exhortation *by way of Caveat*. *Βλέπετε*. take heed.

Now every *Caveat* implies,

1. Evil in the thing.

2. Danger of the thing.

3. That there are ways and means to prevent it. This is implied in the *Caveat*, and expressed in words following.

My design, at this time, will be to enforce the Exhortation of the Text: And seeing that every Application is a *Consequence* or *Covollary* arising from some *Antecedent* Proposition, and the force of it is *finally* resolved into the *truth* and *evidence* and *concernment* of that *Antecedent*: Therefore it will be necessary to draw out that *Antecedent* by reflecting briefly upon the Text as it lies in the *Series* of the Epistle.

A 4

I. Then,

3. 1.  
6 4.

I. Then, for the *Persons*. They are here styled *Brethren*, and elsewhere, *Holy Brethren*, *Partakers of the heavenly Calling*. They were *φωτισθέντες*, baptized into the *Profession* of the Gospel, they had *tasted* of the *Word of God*, and the power of the world to come.

II. The Matter. *Unbelief*, or rather *Disbelief*, (not Negative Infidelity, but a positive Revolting from the faith which they had professed) Generally, a Disbelief of the *Word of God*; Particularly, a Disbelief of the Gospel, as to the *Doctrines*, or *Promises*, or *Threatnings* thereof.

III. For the *Form* that which is here expressed by βλέπετε (look to it) is in the other forms of *Exhortation*, throughout the Epistle, expressed by termes of the greatest *Emphasis* and earnestness imaginable, Let us Fear lest we fall short, 4. 1.

Labour to enter, 4. 11.

Use diligence, not be slothful, 6. 11, 12.

Press earnestly, draw near, hold fast, 10. 22.

ΣΕΙΣ

ἑσπότερος προσέχει μὴ πῶς πα-  
εῖρῃσιν. Let us give more dili-  
gent heed lest by any means we should  
let it slip, 2.1.

So that the Summe of the Apostles  
*Argumentation* is this: *The last resoluti-*  
*on of all the Obligation of men, is into*  
*reasons of Duty and of Interest.*

If there be *Wickedness* in *Infideli-*  
*ty*, it is matter of *Duty*, if there be  
*Danger* in it, and *Danger* of it, it is mat-  
ter of *Interest* and *Concernment* to Be-  
ware of it.

This *Heart of Unbelief* is an *Evil*  
heart (καρδία πονηρά) there is *Wicked-*  
*ness* in it. It grieves the Spirit of God;  
It provoked him So, that he swore in his  
wrath, that he would take Vengeance  
for it: there is *Danger* in it. Yet it was  
a thing *Ordinary* and *common* amongst  
the *Fathers* of these Hebrews, it was  
neque *Novum*, neque *Rarum*, There is  
*Danger* of it.

“ It is the *Duty* and *Concernment*  
“ of every one *Professing* Christianity  
“ to take heed lest there be in them an  
“ heart of *Unbelief*; and to use all means  
“ to prevent it. This is the *Ante-*  
“ cedent. *Where-*

*Wherefore take heed brethren, &c.* —  
(which is the Exhortation by way of  
Caveat; — *Exhort one another daily,*  
&c. which is the way to prevent it.

So then for the enforcement of the  
exhortation upon the whole matter, I  
am to speak

I. *Of the Evil of Infidelity.*

II. *Of the Danger of falling into it.*

III. *Of the means of preventing it.*

And then to conclude with

IV. *The Exhortation of the Text.*

In speaking of the *Evil of Infidelity*, I shall not discourse at large, but  
confine my self to an enquiry into *two*  
*pretenses* (Which having been broach-  
ed in the late times of *Infidelity towards*  
*the King*, are said to have operated  
very far towards a general *Apostacy*  
from the faith, and the production of  
*Infidelity towards God*) both which  
*appealing to the tenor of the Scriptures*;  
must be examined by them.

The first is of a *famous Author*, and  
it is this, That the *Scriptures* do not  
make *Infidelity* to be a *Sin*, at the time  
of the delivery of the *Scriptures*.

The

The second is of a *Writer more obscure*, but in it self, so agreeable to the disposition of the present generation, that it hath possessed the minds of many; it is this, that

*Although Infidelity* (according to the Scriptures) in the times of *Christ and his Apostles*, were *sinful*, and *inexcusable*; yet in *our times*, it is *excusable*. These are the pretences to be examined.

The Substance of the Gospel, as it immediately relates to Christian duty, is summarily reduced to the *Doctrines* and *Injunctions* of our Lord Christ, and his Apostles.

The Author of *Leviathan* (cap. 42. pag. 286.) tells us in plain terms, that "We do not read any where (in the Scriptures) that they which received not the *Doctrine* of Christ, did therein *sin*."

"And again, that the *Injunctions* of Christ, and his *Apostles*, men might refuse without sin.

Now concerning this assertion, I cannot chuse but say, that had I not been acquainted with the works of that author

thour (especially those relating to religion) I should exceedingly wonder at it, because it *supposes* men never to look into their Bibles, which is the thing it would perswade.

**Mat. 21. 43.** In the 21. of Matth. Our Saviour asks the *Jewes* this question, *Did ye never read in the Scriptures* such a thing: a question which I must repeat to the *Assertors* of this *doctrine*. Did they *never read in the Scriptures* the *Sinfulness*, the *Danger*, the *Heinousness* of Infidelity? Surely he that runs may read it.

**I. Luc. 9. 41.** Our Saviour Christ, *before his death*, did *oftentimes* vehemently rebuke his Disciples, for *Infidelity*, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I endure you? (*Quousque tandem abutemini patientiâ nostrâ*) And *after his Resurrection*, he calls them *fools* and *slow of heart*, for unbelieving: Did they never read these *Increpations*?

**2.** The *Author* of this Epistle, and the *rest of the Apostles*, do every where *vehemently* and earnestly *dehort* from Unbelief. Did they *never read* these *Dehortations*?

**3.** In the 8 of *John*, Christ tells the *Jews*,



## of Infidelity.

II

*Jews*, that if they *believe* not, they *shall dy in their Sins*. That the *wrath* of God *abideth* on them, that *he that believeth* not, is *damned* already. Did they never read these *Denunciations*? Jo. 8. 24.  
3. 36.

Yes! these last, it seems this Author had read, & as his manner is, thinking he could accommodate an answer to these, he hath pronounced securely of all the rest: *To these* he saith that they import onely a *non-remission* of the *sins committed aganst the laws of their Country*; (that they should dy in *them*;) but that they do not evince, any *sinfulness* to be in *Infidelity*; Wherefore I must crave licence to proceed.

The *Apostle* in the 21 of the Revelations, give a *Catalogue* of such *sinners* as 4.  
R. 21. 8. are of the *bigest rank*, *Such* as are most *abominable* in the eyes of God, *Such* as are to have their *portion* in that *lake* which burneth with *fire* and *brimstone*, and he puts *Unbelievers* in the head of this Regiment The *fearful* and “*Unbelievers*, and *Abominable*, and *Murtherers*, and *Whoremongers*, and *Sorcerers*, and *Lyars* shall have their *portion* “in that lake.

But

*Obj. 1.* But it may be, perhaps; that the *Scripture* doth not in *plain* and *express* *termes*; affirm Infidelity to be Sinful!

*Ref. 1.* The Text tells us *plainly* and *expressly*, that an heart of unbelief is καρδια πονηρα (not κακη but πονηρα, not incommodious but wicked.)

*Obj. 2.* But *Philosophers* and *Mathematicians*; (pretending *Strictness* & *demonstration* in discourse) regard *not* *general* words; but have recourse to the *Definitions* of *things*, and from *thence* proceed to *affirm* or *deny* the *Attribution* which is under question. Let us therefore have recourse to the *definition* of *Sin*.

Those who have spoken most *accurately* concerning the *nature* of *Sin*, they have resolved, that the *formal* *notion* of it, consists in a *departure* from *God*. it is *Aversio à Deo*, & *Conversio ad creaturam*.

*Jer. 2. 12.* In the second of *Jeremy*, and 12. we find the *Prophet* as it were in *furor* *sacro* (in a prophetic rage) *breaking* forth into this *Exclamation*. "Be *astonished*, "O ye *heavens*, be ye horribly afraid, be "very *desolate* saith the Lord! *What* ailes the *Prophet* to cry so loud?

to make the *heavens* resound his *Exclamation*? my people (saith he) have committed two *Great* evils, they have *Forsaken* me, that's the first. An heart of unbelief, is an *evil heart*, in departing from the living God.

It is true that the *Spirit* of God in the Scriptures, doth not usually descend to *Logical accuracy*, to the *quatenus*, or *Causality*, to the observation of the rules of *κατὰ πᾶσι, καὶ αὐτὸ, καὶ ὅλην πρῶτον*.

And this makes it oft-times, *harder* to deal with men of *perverse* minds, then *many* do imagine. But the more *rare* this is, the more you will take notice of the *Providence*, when you shall consider, how *accurately*, and how *fully*, the Scripture hath determined that which is in *Question*.

In the 16. of *Joh. 8.* our Saviour *Joh. 16.8.* tells them, that the Spirit shall rebuke the world of *Sin*, of *righteousness*, of *judgement*: Of *Sin*, *Because* they *believe not* on him. *Joh. 3. 18.* he that *believeth not* is *Condemned*, *because* he *believeth not*. *Ἀὐτὴ ἔστιν ἡ κρίσις*, the rejection of the Gospel is said to be *the*

3.18.  
15.

the very *Condemnation*, So expressly is, the *αἰὼν αἰὼν*, delivered to us, (by *Causal* and *Identical* propositions) in the Scripture; Who is it now, that can *persuade* us, that the *Scriptures* do not affirm, any *Sinfulness* to be in *Infidelity*?

Yes verily! the *Scriptures* not only teach us, that *unbelief* is a *sin*, but they teach us likewise

6. The *Heinousness* and *Aggravation*, the *Sinfulness* and *Punishment* of this *Sin*.

It was *this* that brought all other *sin* into the *World*; and every *Premeditated sin* arises from it. It *hardens* the heart, and *fears* the *Conscience*, and makes it bid *defiance* to the *Lord of Glory*.

Concerning *David* we read in the *Psalms*, that once he said in his *Haste* that all men are *liars*, did he *revoke* it when he was at *leisure*? No, the more he thought of it, the higher he proceeds, and becomes the more assured in this charge; Surely (saith he) Men of *low degree* are *Vanity*, and men of *high degree* are (not liars but) a *Lie*. Yet if

Pf. 61.9.

one

one gives the *lie* to one of these *lyars*, it is the utmost provocation; it is the *stated word of defiance*, concluded fit to *justify the Duel or the Stab*. On the other side, God glories in this, that he is *not a man* that he should *lie*, that the strength of Israel will not lie, yet *infidelity* gives him the *lye*. "*He that believeth not God makes him a Liar.*" (1 Joh. 5. 10.)

7. I desire to know *what is that xεντιξις*, whereby the *Heinousness* of any sin is to be estimated.

Is it the *denunciation of Future Vengeance*? "*The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty Angels, in flaming fire, taking Vengeance upon Unbelievers, and they shall be punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord and from the presence of his power.*" Ro. 1. 7.

Is it *Old or New, Past, or present Instances of Vengeance*? *Were not the body of this people newly cut off for unbelief*? And of *ancient dayes*, whose were the *Carcasses* that fell in the *Wilderness*; and to whom did God swear in his

B      wrath,

Heb. 3.

wrath, that they should *not* enter into his rest, but to them that *believed not*?

Consider but the story, from whence the *Exhortation* of the Text arises. *How God was provoked through unbelief.* The text tells us. that he was *Moved*, he *was Tempted*, he was *Grieved*, he was *Provoked*, till he swore in his wrath —

Ps. 95.

The words are taken out of the 95 Psalm, to which the 78. is parallel.  
 “ *They were* (saith the Psalmist) *a stubborn and rebellious Generation*; They  
 “ *tempted God*, and *spoke against him*,  
 “ *Therefore the Lord heard this and*  
 “ *was wroth*: So a *fire was kindled*  
 “ *against Jacob and anger against Israel*;  
 “ *Because they believed not in God, and*  
 “ *trusted not in his Salvation* — —  
 “ *When God heard this, he was*  
 “ *wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel*,  
 “ *he gave way to his Indignation*,  
 “ *wrath, anger, displeasure and Fear-*  
 “ *fulness.*

I conceive, now the *first* Question to be stated, viz. *Whether* (according to the tenor of the Scripture) *Infidelity* were *sinful and dangerous*, in the time of

of the *delivery* of the *Scriptures* : I proceed to the second Question, viz. (*However it was in antient times.*)

2. Whether Infidelity, be not in such times as ours Excusable ?

My meaning is this: *Whether* (speaking according to Scriptural grounds, and reason) *Now* that *Miracles*, *extraordinary gifts* and *Prophecies* are *ceased*, *Infidelity* be *not* become *Excusable* (however it might be *Sinful* and *inexcusable* during the time when *Prophecies* and *Miracles* were in use ?)

The *first* verse of this Epistle (to the Hebrews ) tells us what *powerful* and *noble motives* to believe, God had afforded to the *Fathers*.

God himself was pleased to speak to them, πολυμερῶς & πολυτρόπως, at sundry times, and in divers manners.

In the *Times* of the *Patriarchs*, *Judges*, *Kings*, and *Prophets* by the *Wayes* of *Visions*, *Dreams*, *Voices*, *Similitudes*, *Urim*, and by divers *miracles* and *wonders*.

So likewise, for those that are here exhorted; About the time of the *Writing* of this Epistle; God had spoken

to them by his *Son* (the brightness of his Glory, the image of his person) And by the *Apostles*, to whom also he bare *Witness*, by mighty signes and wonders, by divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Now that *Such* men as *these*, who had so great *advantages* to bring them to *believe*, should be *severely punished* for *Infidelity*, I am perswaded there is hardly any man, but thinks it very just and reasonable.

*That* such as had *seen* the wonders of God, in *Egypt* and the *Wilderness*, so *manifestly miraculous*, so *often repeated*, and yet for *all this* would not *believe*, that *their Carcasses* should *fall* in the *Wilderness*.

That *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, who had *known* the miracles which had been done by the *Apostles*, should think to *consen* the *Apostles*: it *deserved* the *Judgment* that befell them.

As for *our selves* had we lived in the times of *Miracles* or *Prophecies*, we doubt not but we should have *believed*. Or, as *Philip* said, shew us the father, and it sufficeth. Could we but once see a *miracle*



*racle, or talk with one returning from the dead ; it should suffice, we would believe.*

But *seeing* it is now *many hundreds* of yeares, Since these things are *ceased*, and we have nothing left us, *Prater miraculorum famam* ; It we shall not believe the Gospel ; by some it is *openly pretended*, and by many it is *secretly imagined*, that, *in this case* we may be *Excused*.

I *could* wish that the *time* would serve, *Clearly* to rid away this *phantasm* ; In order to it, I shall briefly doe three things.

1. Shew that this *Phantastical* imagination is no new invention but that it hath of old, been the conceit of Abominable Hypocrites. 1.

2ly. I shall *inquire* a little into the grounds of this Conceit, and shew the *mistake* of those *suppositions*, into which it is *resolved*. 2.

3ly. I shall *shew*, that our *Saviour* (Knowing the thoughts of men) hath taken *particular* care to prevent this *Imagination* ; and hath clearly decided the matter in Question. 3.

I. Though the *present* age be fruitful in *inventions* tending this way, yet this hath been *Anticipated* by the *Wits* of former times.

*Luc. 11. 47.* In the 11 of *Luke* 47. We find the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, building the *Sepulchers* of the *Prophets*, whom their fathers had killed.

*Mat. 23. 30.* If we would know, what they *pretended*, in so doing, we shall find it in the parallel place of *Matthew*. They said, if we had been in the *days* of our fathers, *we would not* have been *partakers* with them, in the *blood* of the *Prophets*.

That these men, *did not* believe the *Prophets*, it is *manifest*; *Christ* tells them, if they had believed the *Prophets*, they would have believed *him*: for they wrote of him.

But that they *would* have believed the *Prophets*, (and not have murdered them) had they lived in their times, *this they pretend*: and it is very *probable*, they had that *opinion*.

*Yes Verily!* had they lived in the *days* of *Miracles* and *Prophecies*, they would have believed, the very *con-*  
*ceit*

ceit which is now Pretended!

But the *Truth* is, these men were *abominable Hypocrites*, and the cause of their *Unbelief*, was not the want of *miracles* and *Prophecies* but *Carnal prejudice*, and *interest*, and the *Vile affections* of their hearts. Did not *Christ* work *miracles*? Was not he that *Prophet* which was to come? Yet they took him, and with wicked hands they *slaw him*, and brought upon themselves the *bloud* of *all the Prophets*.

But 2ly. If we shall *examine* the *bottom* of this fancy, and *resolve* it into its *Principles*, we shall finde that it supposes these things.

1. That the *want* of the sight of *miracles*, is *sufficient* to *Justifie unbelief*.

2. That to *live* in the *very age* of *miracles*, is apter to create *beleif*, then to be *born* and *educated*, in a *believing* nation, after the world hath been *convinc'd* by the *miracles* of *former times* (which is our *Case*.)

3. That the *bare sight* of *miracles*, is of it self alone, *sufficient* to create *be-*

lief, in every person that should see them.

Of which suppositions, the *first* is contrary to *common Reason*, and the two *later* are *contrary to Scriptural Reason*, and to the *experience* of the world.

1. *If the want of the sight of miracles were enough to justify Infidelity, then for every Dogma to be believed, Every Individual person, were to expect the sight of miracles; which if it should happen, the wonder would cease, and miracles become No miracles, by the frequency of the performances of them, and so they would be inept to create belief.*

*Every work of nature, is in it self a miracle; Who would not think it easier to recover a man, (who had all his parts and humours already formed,) from the dead, then from that liquid principle whereof Job speakes, to raise up flesh and skin, bones and sinews: to Advance an understanding creature, capable of Adoring or blaspheming the maker of him? Yet that is a miracle, and this is none, onely through the rarity of one, and frequency of the other.* Again

Job. 10. 10.

Again, if every one were to see miracles, the merit of faith would be taken away. *1c. 20. 29.* "Jesus said unto Thomas, because thou hast seen --- thou hast believed, Blessed are they that have not seen, yet have believed. This for the first supposition.

2. The second is this, that to live in the very age of miracles, is apter to create a belief, then to live in a believing nation on a good time after the times of Miracles.

But, contrary to this, we have instances both in Jews and Gentiles. After near 4000 years. How pertinaciously do the Jews adhere to Moses, against whom their fathers *Murmured*, and *rebelled*, notwithstanding the sight of all his miracles; and when he had wrought that great miracle upon Corah and for his rebellion, the next day they rebelled again.

And we find now the whole world, (especially the wiser part) Converted to Christianity, whereas the Apostles complain of the paucity of professors, and the Infidelity of the Jews, in the Age of Christ and his Apostles, was so great

great and resolute that it hath a fatal operation upon that nation unto this day.

I am sensible, that in the Comparison of later ages with the dayes of miracles, I may be thought *δυσλδιαν τινος* *σεν*, and to advance a paradox, where that I may not lean on my own understanding, I beseech you to Consider, our Saviours decision of the Question which we have in hand.

I suppose, I may take it for granted, that the Condition of the Jews in our Saviours time, was in respect of Moses, the same (as to the matter in Question) with our Condition in respect of Christ.

The tradition of the law, was accompanied with mighty Signes and wonders. And so was likewise the tradition of the Gospel.

In the times succeeding Moses, God for a Season continued the sensible manifestation of his presence, by miracles. So he did likewise in the times succeeding Christ.

But before the time of our Saviour both miracles and Prophecies had a long time

time ceased. We see not our Tokens Psalm 74.  
9.  
(saith the Psalmist) there is not one Prophet left; *as it is with us at this day.*

*Onely*, they had the *books of Moses and the Prophets*, *Just so Conveighed and propounded to them, as our Scriptures have been to us.*

*So that, if the Question be proposed concerning those Jews; whether the present miracles of Christ, or the complexion of Motives which they had, to induce them to believe the writings of Moses, were apter to create belief, It is the same with our Question, Whether the living in The time of Miracles, or our Motives; are more powerful to believing. To determine which Question; we may observe; That the Apostles after the sight of all our Saviours miracles, Continued in unbelief, till he had opened unto them the Scriptures, of Moses and the Prophets. That after many miracles, he refers the Jews to the searching of the Scriptures; (bringing them *a notiori ad ignotius.*) And in the 5 of John and the 47. he decides this Question by another, Jo. 5. 47.  
if*

“ if ye do not believe the writings of  
 “ *Moses, how shall ye believe my Words?*

Thus much concerning the 2 suppo-  
 sition.

3. The 3 is this, that the *sight* of  
 miracles, is of it *self alone*, *sufficient*  
 to bring every person to believing.

We ought indeed to owne it, to the  
 eternal Glory of our *Blessed Redeemer*,  
 that the *Faith* of Christians is founded  
 upon his *Miracles* as well as on his *Do-*  
*ctrine*, and *example*. And he himself  
 tells the *Jews*, that if he had not done  
 miracles they should not have had sin  
 (i. e. the Sin of *Infidelity*.) But *Now*  
 to dream of miracles, and *hanker* after  
 them; or to think to *Excuse* our *Infidelity*,  
 for want of the sight of them,  
 (as if that alone would certainly make  
 believers of us all,) it argues that we  
 have been *sloathful* readers of the Scrip-  
 tures.

It hapned to our Saviours *miracles* as  
 it did to his *Preaching*; according to  
 his *parable* of the *sower*. Some of them  
 lighted upon hearts that were *honest*  
 and good, and brought forth the fruit of  
 believing. Others fell by the way side,  
 or



or upon *stony places*, or among the *Thornes*.

The *prepossession* of their minds, by an *expectation* of a *temporal Messiah*, in the *Rulers*; The *fear of persecution* by them in the *People*; The *Cares of the World*, and *deceitfulness* of riches, The *pleasures and lusts*, to which the *Austerities of the Gospel-rules*, were opposit; and *Many other prejudices*, deeply rooted in the *hearts of a pervers* and *froward Generation*, prevailed against the *sight of miracles*; and *None* were more *pervers* and *resolute unbelievers*, then some of those, who had the *Advantage of this great argument* for believing.

If the *sight of Miracles alone*, were sufficient to produce belief, in *all kinds of Spectators*, certainly the *Scribes and Pharisees*, (who by their learning were able to Judge of a miracle,) the *Countrymen and Kinsmen of Christ* (with whom he was most *Conversant*,) should have been most *Eminent* in believing.

But behold the *inchantment of prejudice and Carnal Interest*! In the 5. of Luc. 5. 11.  
*Luke 21. The Pharisees and Doctors*  
*saw*

saw the *miracles* of Christ, and yet they concluded him a *Blasphemer*. And when he had healed, him that was borne blind; they (hypocritically) bad the man give Glory to God, and said *they knew that Jesus was a sinner*.

Joh. 9. 24. *They turn'd his miracles into wantonness, fain'd themselves Just men, that they might tempt him, i. e. put a trick upon him. demanding a sign for a sight, onely to satisfy their wanton Curiosity.*

Ma. 13. 58. *As for his Countrymen, this Prophet had no honour there, he did not many miracles, among them, because of their unbeleef. His friends said he, was beside himself, and went to lay hold on him.*

Mar. 3. 21. Jo. 7. 5. *As for the People, In the 6 of John Jo. 6. 10. we find, that Christ fed 5000 men with 5 loavs and 2 small fishes, so that they said this is of a truth that Prophet. But the Very next day (ver. 22.) the Very men that had eaten of the loaves (26) Said unto him what sign shewest thou that we may beleive? what dost thou work! (30.) as if a miracle had not been a Signe!*

He

He wrought a miracle among the *Ma. 5. 17.*  
*Gadarens*, and they besought him to be  
 gone. Others were offended at him,  
 and cast him out of their City. *The*  
*issue of all his miracles*, was this; *Some* *Jo. 7. 12.*  
 said he was a good man, *Others* *Nay!*  
 but he *deceiveth the people.* And ma- *Jo. 10. 20.*  
 ny said he had a Devil and was mad.

*Nay!* when he hung upon the cross they  
 acknowledged his miracles, and jeered him  
 with them; He saved others; himself he  
 cannot save; let him do one more mira-  
 cle, let him come down from the Cross,  
 and we will believe him: So Vain is  
 the pretence of those, who think to ex-  
 cuse their Infidelity, because they cannot  
 see a miracle! So false are the Grounds  
 of that opinion.

3. Briefly! to bring this Argument  
 to an issue.

3.

If it were granted to these persons,  
 to see a miracle, what kind of miracle  
 would they chuse, to convince their un-  
 derstandings, and settel them in religi-  
 on? We are here I confess *in loco*  
*Conjecturali*, and no man can tell  
 what miracle another man would  
 chuse, but I am persuaded, that  
 which

which most men would agree upon, as most conducing to that purpose whereof we are speaking would be this; that to assure them of the *Immortality* of the Soul and of the rewards and *punishments* of the world to come, and to satisfy their *Curiosity* in some other doubts and *scruples*; They might once be allowed to see and converse with some one, that might rise from the dead who might resolve their *Questions*, concerning the condition of those that are in Hades.

3. I say then, that our Saviour who knew, what was in man, and needed not that any one should tell him *foreseeing* this *Phantastical* conceit, hath shewed the folly of it, and *preoccupied* this vain resort.

Luc. 16. 23. In the 16 of *Luke* 27. *Dives* makes it his request to *Abraham*; that he would send *Lazarus* from the dead; to testify to his brethren, those things which these men dream of.

*Abraham* refers them to the *Scriptures*, which were in the same manner recommended to them as our *Scriptures* are

are to us. “*They have Moses and the  
“ Prophets, &c. let them hear them.*

„ *He saith unto him, “ Nay fa-  
“ ther Abraham, but if one went to  
“ them from the dead, they would  
“ believe.*

And he ( *Abraham* ) said “ *If they  
“ hear not Moses and the Prophets,  
“ neither will they be persuaded though  
one rose from the dead.*

*This I take to be a clear and a full de-  
termination of the matter in Question;  
And if any one should imagine, that  
this determination was but Conjectural,  
Our Saviour afterward tries the Experi-  
ment, and raises another Lazarus from  
the dead.*

Ioh. 11.

What was the effect of this mans co-  
ming from the dead, did it Convert the  
High Priest or the Scribes the rulers or  
the people; nay, \ but from that very  
day they took counsel together how  
they might put *Jesus* to death. And  
the Chief Priests Consulted, how they  
might put *Lazarus* to death Also.

53.

Upon these Considerations; we may in-  
fallibly Conclude, that Infidelity in Such  
times as ours, is no more excusable,

C

then

then it was in the *dayes* of *Christ* or his *Apostles*; the times of *miracles* and *pbrophesies*.

So much of the *first Supposition*, in the *Caveat* of the text, the *Sinfulness* of *Infidelity*, in *General* at *all times*, And the *Inexcusableness* in *our times*, which makes it our *Duty* to take heed of it;

II. I pass to the *second supposition*, concerning the *Danger* of *falling into it*, which makes it our *concernment* and *Interest* to beware of it. For if this be clear, the *Exhortation* will be *powerful*, *take heed brethren*, &c.

Now, the *Danger* of *falling into infidelity*, is in it self so *conspicuous*, and made so *sensible* by every day's *experience*, that I wish the *proof* of it were *difficult*, so as to *Justify* a *studious* & *laborious* demonstration of it.

At once, to *shorten my discourse*, and to *remove* the suspicion of any *Satyri- cal reflexion* upon those that hear me; I shall shew, that the *Greatest Advan- tages*, have not preserved the best of *men*, from sometimes falling into *Infidelity*. Take heed therefore brethren.

The

The greatest *Helps* and *Advantages* against unbelief, I conceive to be these ensuing.

1. *Evidences of Gods Presence.* 2. *Or these lighting on a good understanding.* 3. *At least upon the Ablest of men.* 4. *Such as have held Communion with God.* 5. *Or have been eminent for the habit and exercise of faith.* 6. *Or these with warnings to prevent the Danger of falling.* 7. *And those reiterated.* Yet all these, have not preserved good men from sometimes falling. A word of each.

1. First then, to begin with the persons in the Context, What greater *Evidences* of the *Presence* of God can be Imagined, then they enjoyed; In *Egypt* in their passage over the red Sea, in the *Wilderness*, "my presence, saith God, shall go along with you, They were conducted by a Pillar of a Cloud, &c. they were Supported, and Corrected by Visible and palpable instances of Gods power and presence. Yet they tempted and grieved the Spirit of God, by their *Infidelity*, for "they believed not for all his Wondrous Works.

2. But these *Fewes* were a *dull and stupid* people. If God should once manifest himself, to a *wise and understanding* person (Such as we take our selves to be) We may think it impossible to fall into unbelief.

I suppose it will be *no disparagement* to these *Objectors*, to say, that *Solomon* might be as *Wise and Knowing*, as *Wary and Philosophical* as *they*. And as for the *manifestation* of Gods presence, the Scripture tells us Expressly, that *God appeared* to him at *Gibeon*. Where he made a *promise* to him which he performed.

Yet *Solomon* fell into the *grossest Infidelity*: to think there were *Gods and Goddesses*, To worship *Asteroth*, the *Goddeſs* of the *Sidonians*, and *Milcom* the *Abomination* of the *Ammonites*.

3. But it may be yet *Objected*, that *Solomon* did this in the *Dotage* of his years, and his *Dotage* upon his *Idolatrous wives*, which turned away his heart, but that it *could not* have proceeded from him, before his *understanding* was empayred.

Be-



Behold then a greater than *Solomon*! even *Adam* in his full strength when he was newly made after the similitude of God, a little lower than the Angels. God several times appeared to him in the Garden; Yet he fell through unbelief, and drew all his posterity into his ruine.

4. But *Adam* though he had perfection of Nature yet he wanted *Grace*, whereby he might have held Communion with God, which having been once enjoyed, would for ever have kept him from infidelity, or deliberate sin, which alwayes proceeds from it.

Consider then the case of *David*! Salm. 16.  
of whom it is said, that the Spirit of <sup>13.</sup>  
the Lord God came upon him; That Psal. 89. 4.  
God himself made a Covenant with him, and Swore unto him by his holiness, that he would not fail him.

And as for *David* who was like unto him, for Devotion and Zeal, for spiritual Communion and intercourse with God? He was the sweet singer of *Israel*; and how often do we find, his Spirit inebriated, and transported, in the

Celebration of his *divine* and *ravishing* enjoyments.

Yet we find him falling from all this height, and great and terrible was his fall; he went *mourning* for it all his days, and bowed down his head continually.

5. But perhaps it may be thought, that though *David* was an Excellent man, yet seeing his Eminency lay not in the gift of *Faith*, but in *Zeal*, or in some other *Grace*, the danger may not yet be so very considerable.

Behold then even *Abraham*: the Darling of the almighty, who conversed with God as a man converseth with his Friend: to whom God communicated his presence in *Dreams*, in *Visions*, in *Apparitions*, πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως.

He was imbued with the *Habit* of Faith. he exerted it in the noblest exercise; he manifested it in the *heroical* degree, so that he became the *Father* of the *Faithful*.

Yet once we find him offending (tripping) at this stone of stumbling; Equivocating through unbelief.

6 But

6. But all these instances were during the *Ancient Dispensation*, when the *Communication* of the presence of God was more *Obscure*; before the *fulfness* of time was come, when the *word* was made *flesh* and dwelt amongst men; and they saw his glory as the glory of the only begotten Son of God.

Besides! we do not find that they were particularly and distinctly warned of their danger, which may lessen the Wonder of the fall.

Consider then the Case, of *Peter*, the first of the *Apostles*. He had been closely conversant with *Christ* during all the time of his *Ministry*. Was a witness of his miracles; saw his *Transfiguration*, Heard the Voice which came to him from the *Excellent glory*, saying *this is my beloved Son* — Psal. 1, 19.

As for his faith, he it was, that made that *Confession*, upon which the *Christian Church* is founded. And *Christ* had prayed for him that his faith should not fail.

He was a *Valiant man*; and he *Undertook* that though he died, he would neither forsake, nor deny, his Master,

When Christ forewarns him, plainly and punctually, that his faith would fail him. That *very night*, before a certain hour; So that it was impossible he should be surprised.

You know his Undertakings and of his Failings it is unnecessary to speak.

7. I know nothing now that can be alledged, against the general propensity of all men to Unbeleif, but this, that Peter was now single and alone, that he failed onely this time; when he was environed with Bills and Staves and in Danger of his Life.

Wherefore let us call to mind the Case of all the Apostles, in the great Foundation of our Faith the Article of Christs Resurrection. When these temptations were away.

The resurrection of the dead was in those times so commonly believed, that it was conceived of Christ, that he was one of the Old Prophets risen from the Dead, and Herod said he was John the Baptist risen from the dead.

Of the resurrection, the Apostles had seen Experiments, in Lazarus, and in the

the bodies of the *Saints* which arose.

Concerning Christ's *resurrectio* how plainly and often were they forewarned, After he was risen, how often were they told of it. Yet how grossely and often did they fail.

In the 8 of *Mark* 31 Christ tells his *Disciples*, that he should be killed, and the 3 day he would rise again. He spake this saying openly; So openly that the *Jews* took notice of it (this deceiver said that the third day he would rise again) moreover he promised them plainly that after he was risen, he would go before them into *Galilee*, and appointed them a certain *Mountain* where they should see him.

*Mar. 2. 31.*

*Mat. 2. 7.*

*62.*

*Mat. 26. 31.*

*Mar. 16. 13*

*13.*

Yet after he was risen; *Mary Magdalen* told them that he had appeared to her. But they believed not *Mary Magd.* *Foanna*, and *Mary the Mother of James*, told them the same, But their Speech seemed to them as *Idle tales*.

The 2 *Disciples* told the rest, that he had appeared to them going to *Emmaus*, but they believed them not.

He appeared in the midst of ten of them at once, shewed them his hands and

and *his side*, But they *believed not* for joy.

Luc. 24. 41.  
Mat. 28. 7.

Christ when appeared to the Women, bade them tell the Disciples and Peter, that according to his promise, they should see him in *Galilie*.

17

And the 11. Disciples went into *Galilie*, to a mountain which *Jesus* had appointed them, And when they saw him, they *Worshiped*, But some *doubted*.

Mat. 16. 14.

So that Christ, almost in his last words, *Upbraided* them with their *Unbelief*—because they believed not them who had seen him, after he was risen.

So prone are even the *best of men*, after their highest attainments, under the *best advantages*, to fall sometime into *Infidelity*! So great is the danger of *Unbelief*!

It is true indeed, that all these, Mic. 7. 8. might say with the Prophet, Rejoyce not against me O mine enemy, for though I fall, I shall arise again. Yet "all these things are written for our learning, that he that thinketh he standeth, may take heed lest he fall. If these things have been done to the green tree,

tree, what may be done to the *dry*? If the *worthies* and the *mighty* have *fallen* (how have the *mighty* fallen?) ought not the *feeble* to take care? Yes certainly they ought.

III.

And to use all means to prevent their falling, which is the *third thing*, supposed in the Caveat, and expressed in the words following "Take heed brethren least, &c. Exhort one another daily—

Now the *Meanes* to prevent the falling into *Infidelity* are the *Arguments* evincing the *truth* of the *Gospel* which are very *numerous*. Whereof I cannot now speak particularly.

The Apostle in this Epistle makes use of 2. sorts viz,

- From { 1. Scriptures of the Old Testament.  
2. Common Reason whereof I shall speak a little.

The *Argument* from *Reason* is delivered in the 2. Chap. v. 3. 4.

"The Gospel was delivered by the Lord,  
"and

"and confirmed (to us) by them that  
"heard him.

"God also bearing them Witness  
"with Signs and wonders, and divers  
"miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost,

God bare witness to  
Christ the Author of the Gospel:  
And to the Apostles, the Promulgers  
of the Gospel. Wherefore it is to be  
believed.

The Antecedent of this Enthymem is  
the sum of what I shall deliver.

10. 8. 13.

"When the Pharisees said unto  
"Christ, thy Record is not true, be-  
"cause thou bearest record of thy self.  
"I am one (saith Christ) that bear re-  
"cord of myself, and the Father that  
"sent me, beareth witness of me.

18.  
25. 26.  
27.

Moreover he tells the Disciples that  
the Comforter should testify of him. And  
ye also shall bear witness, because ye  
have been with me from the beginning.

So that beside the Witness of the  
Apostles, the Gospel had the Attestati-  
on of all the persons of the Trinity; viz.

Of the } 1. Father,  
          } 2. Son,  
          } 3. Holy Ghost.

I. God



1. God the Father bore witness to his Son; and that he did, by 1. *Visible Signes*, and 2. *Audible Voices*, 3. *by Mission of Angels*, 4. *by Cooperating in his Miracles*, &c.

1. At his *Nativity*, a new *Star* appeared. At his *Baptism* they saw the *heaven* opened, and the *Spirit* sent from the *Father* in the *visible* shape of a *Dove* and lighting upon him. Before his *Passion*, he was *transfigured* in their sight. And At it the *Sunne* was *eclipsed* when the *Moon* was full, the *Vail*, the *Rocks*, rent, So that the *Centurion* said, *Surely this man was the Son of God*, *Bodies of Saints* were seen of many, all these were *visible signes*.

2. As for the בן קול (the daughter of the Voice) In his *Baptism* Lo! Mar. 3. 17.  
17. 5. a voice from *heaven*, Saying, *This is my beloved Son*—At his *Transfiguration* a Voice came out of a *cloud*, which said, *This is my beloved Son*—hear him. A little before his death, as he was *Praying* “*Father, glorifie thy Name*, Io. 11. 1 2 There came a voice from *heaven*, Saying, “*I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again*.

3. For

3. *For mission of Angels by the Father, We find them still ready upon all occasions from before his Coming down, to the time of his Ascension into Heaven.*

Luc. 1. 16.  
19.

Mar. 1. 20.

Luc. 2. 9  
31.

Mar. 2. 13  
2. 9. 20.

4. 11.

Luc. 22. 43

Mar. 28. 2.

Mar. 16. 6.

10. 20. 12.

Ac. 1. 16.

Before his *Conception*, the Angel *Gabriel* appeared to *Zachary* and to *Mary*, before his *Nativity* to *Joseph* saying *fear not Joseph*. At the time of his *Nativity* a whole *Chorus* appeared to the *Sheapheards*. In his *Infancy* an Angel appeared twice to *Joseph*, admonishing him of his going to *Egypt* and his return from thence.

In his *Adult age* they ministered to him in his *hunger*; Before his *death*, they *strengthened* him in his *Agony*; After it, they rolled away the stone from his *Sepulcher*; They declared his *resurrection*; And in his *Ascension*, they *stood by*, and *foretold* his coming again to *Judgement*. Ye men of *Galilee* why stand ye gazing? This same *Jesus* —

4. The Father cooperated with him, according to that of our Saviour the father worketh hitherto and I work. — &c.

These

These are some of the *Attestations* of the Father.

2. *Christ bore witness of himself.* And this he did, by proving himself to be the *Messiah*; viz. by fulfilling all the *Prophecies* relating to the *Person* or *Offices*; 1 he *Life*, and the *Death* of the *Messiah*.

His *Generation* was such as cannot be declared, he was born at *Bethlem*, of the tribe of *Juda*, of the *Family* of *David*, about 490. years after the return from *Captivity*. When the *Scepter* was just now departed from *Juda*.

He performed not only the *Substance* of the *Prophecies* but all the *Circumstances* foretold, Concerning the *Life* and *Death* of the *Messiah*.

He was to be a *Prophet*, and so he was. The *Spirit* of the *Lord* anointed him to *preach*, and he spake as never man spake. He foretold many things to come, they all bare him witness.

2. He was to be a *King* and so he was. His *Name* was *Wonderful*; his *Power* was shewen througout the *universal System* of the *World*; the *Angels* good

good and evil, the *Heavens, Elements, Plants, Fishes, Brutes, Health and Sickness, Life and Death*, were all obedient unto his *Word*.

3. He was to be a *Priest* and so he was. He made an *Attonement* by his *Obedience*, and by his *sufferings* to the least *punctilio* ( to the taking of a little *Vinegar* ) and when all things were fulfilled, He cryed with a loud voice *τετέλεσται* it is finished, and he bowed his head and gave up the Ghost.

Moreover, for the *Justification* of his Gospel ( and that he might leave no place for *Infidelity*; ) he rose again from the dead, appeared to many *Convinced them* by all their senses; *They saw him, They heard him, they felt his hands and his side, They Eat and Drank with him; They Conversed with him 40. dayes; He was seen by more then 500. at once; and (lastly,) in the sight of Many of them, he Ascended Visibly into Heaven.*

These were some of the *Testimonies*, which our *Lord Christ* bore to himself.

3. The time would fail me, if I should speak

Speak of all the Testimonies given by the *Holy Spirit*.

In his *Conception*, to *Mary*, fulfilling the Promise of *Gabriel*.

Before his *Nativity* to *Zachary* and *Elizabeth*, in his *Infancy* to *Simeon* and *Hanna*, In his *Baptism* to *John*. I knew "him not, saith *John*, but he that sent me to baptize, said unto me, upon whom "thou shalt see the *Spirit* descending "and resting on him, *that is he*: and I saw the *Spirit* descending: *Throughout* his whole *Ministry*, till his *Death*, the *Spirit* gave witness to him.

Moreover, In his *Resurrection* he was declared the Son of God, with power by the *Holy Ghost*. After his *Ascension*, the *Holy Ghost* fulfilled all his undertakings, In that *Grand Manifestation* at *Pentecost*; at the time and place which *Christ* had undertaken for; A manifestation made to all the Senses, and to men of every nation under heaven, *Parthians* — besides a Multitude of other Instances.

Rom. i.

Act. 2. 5.

Such were the Attestations given to *Christ* (the Author and finisher of our faith).

D

2. And

2. *And for the Apostles (the Promulgators of it) Besides the Change of their Spirits from darkness to light, Whereby they were led out of Ignorance and Infidelity, into all Truth. And from torpid and pusillanimous persons, during the life of their Master, they became, when he was dead, the most active and magnanimous in the world. ( I say, besides this Change ) They had bestowed upon them, All things necessary (either for their, 1. Own Assurance, Or for the 2. Conviction of the World. (Concerning the truth of the Gospel which they delivered.)*

I. As for *themselves*, Besides the Conversation with their Master before and after his Resurrection; they had 1. *Apparitions of Angels*. And to one of them *Christ himself* appeared after he was ascended to his father.

2. They had the *Bath Kol*. (Voices from Heaven) In the 9 of the Acts, We finde a Voice from Heaven maintaining a Dialogue with *Paul*; and at another time, a voice saying to *Peter*, *Arise Peter, Kill and Eat*.

3. They had *extatical Visions*.  
Peter

Peter was in a trance (Act. 10. 10, 19.) Act. 22. 17

Paul rapt up to the third heaven.

4. They had *monitory Dreames*, Paul saw a man in a *Dream*, saying unto him, Come into Macedonia and help us.

5. They had *Impulses* of the Spirit; Act. 16 9. So Paul was *forbid* by the Spirit; to preach the Word in Asia:

II. And for the *Conviction* of the *unbelieving World*

They had *diversities* of gifts and Cor. 12. *Different Administrations*. To one was given the *Word of Wisdom*, to another the *Word of Knowledge*, to another *Faith*, to another the gift of *Healing*, to another *Miracles*, *Prophecies*, *Discerning of Spirits*, The gift of *Tongues*.

As it is in the words which I quoted, "God bare them witness with gifts of the Holy Ghost, and with *Signes* and *Wonders*; and that he did, so far, that I shall be justified by *Christ* himself, if I shall affirm, that the *Apostles* after his death, did *greater* miracles than he himself did in his life.

Of the *same kind* with our Saviours, some they performed, by means, having an appearance of greater strange-

ness, (Christ healed by his *touch*, his *word*, his *spittle*, Peter by his *shadow*, Paul by *Handkerchiefs* taken from his body.) But one great thing there was, wherein they exceeded; The Great and Manifest, and frequent Effusions of the Spirit, The Reception of it upon themselves, the communication of it to others, by Prayer, Preaching, Laying on of Hands; By these it was that the unbelieving world was convinced, and even Simon Magus himself, It is by the power and Vertue of those effusions that we are here met together at this time, that the World continues Christian at this day. And these are some of those standing means and Arguments, whereby the Propensity of our hearts to Infidelity may be overcome; and faith may be gotten, confirmed, recovered at this day: These are therefore to be revolved, Exhort one another daily. To come therefore to a Conclusion.

My text it self is an Application, by way of Exhortation, Exhortations are enforced by Reasons of Duty and Concernment, and these I have hitherto endeavoured to lay before you.

If



If indeed there were no Sinfulness in Infidelity, Or, If in such times as ours, it were excusable, If there were no danger of falling into it, or no means left to remedy or prevent it; It would then indeed be to little purpose to Exhort men to beware.

But if the state of all these things is otherwise, if that be plain and evident; agreeable to Scripture, to Reason and to Experience; If the Speaker hath not beaten the Air, nor the hearers been careless and inattentive, I know not what can be required, to enforce and sharpen the exhortation.

If the time would suffer it, and I were speaking to a Common or Injudicious Auditory, I might think my self concerned, after all that hath been spoken to the understanding, to Apply my discourse to your affections, I should take unto me the various forms of Application used in this Epistle. I would Reprove, Rebuke, Exhort; I would cry aloud, and would not spare. I would lift up my voice like a Watchmans trumpet, warning you from the Lord, concerning that Spirit of irreligion and infidelity

which is said to have overspread the land.

I would *take* to my self a *Lamentation*, yea it should be for a *Lamentation*, for the *Professors of Infidelity*, and the *Infidelity of Professors*, every where. But I may not now be permitted to enlarge upon these things. I may onely pray to God to give you understanding in all things, and beseech you earnestly to consider what hath been spoken, *Concluding* in the words of the Text, *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you, an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. Exhort one another daily —*

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